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AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

the bed of the stream; these are held in position between upright poles set V-wise in the boulders, to which are fastened horizontal bamboo poles as railings. As they have no saws, the 'plank' is a tree trunk with one side trimmed flat with the axe. Even more elaborate bridges are sometimes made at high levels over streams liable to flood, from tree-fork to tree-fork on opposite banks.

Though, as has been said above, agricultural conditions nowadays determine village sites, hill-tops or rocky slopes remain favourite sites, and become commoner as you penetrate farther into the Abujhmar hills. The traditional arrangement is a street some twenty-five yards wide between parallel lines of long-houses; at one end of the street is the *gotul-lon* or village dormitory, generally within a rounded bamboo fence, and sometimes in front of this dormitory will be seen the *udam-garia*, or seat of honour of the *kasyeq-gaita* and possibly also of the secular headman (*gaita* or *peda*), as well as the stones on which the other village elders sit around with them in conclave, but the *udam-garia* custom is not found in all parts of the hills. Sometimes the shrine of the *Nar-Talughi* or Village Mother is actually inside the dormitory fencing, and she is often housed there for a while when a village is being shifted. There are, as a rule, no *bari* (vegetable gardens) attached to each house as amongst most Gonds, including the Bison-horn Marias and the Murias of Bastar; but sometimes the *kasyeq-gaita* has a small tobacco *bari* attached to the dormitory in the centre of the main street. The *Gazetteer* (p. 50) speaks of the 'common granary' as standing in the broad street; but with one partial exception, Nugur village in Kutru Mar in the Indrawati valley, I have never seen this. The villagers generally construct a row of granaries (*manda* or *wijja-dodi*) on piles at the side or rear of the main village street, sometimes nearer the *penda* fields than the village; this row can hardly be called a 'common granary', as each villager has his own granary in the row for his own private food and seed store, the granaries being built together only for convenience, as they can then be watched at night by one watchman for the whole village, sleeping in a special hut at the side of the granaries or under a granary. At Nugur there were big matting bins in the main street in which all the rice seed of the village was stored; but here the village had come under the economic thraldom of some Teli tradesmen, who for years had advanced rice to the cultivators. The bins were left in the collective charge of the headman and elders, and any villager could help himself to seed on the understanding that at harvest he would replace it with 50 per cent. interest, the Teli owners being also free to remove the surplus from time to time.

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AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

This traditional arrangement of the Hill Maria villages is far from being always observed. I have seen a village constructed in this way on one of its traditional sites (*pagh* or *pagha'i*; Murias say *pare*, while Bison-horn Marias generally use the Halbi word *padar*), and then four years later found it reconstructed on one of the alternative sites with little sign of the traditional grouping; and I have also seen the converse occur. In fact, the configuration of the site may make the traditional arrangement difficult. It is also being gradually abandoned in the villages on the edges of the hills into which the individualism of surrounding plains villages is creeping, and in the few villages such as Orcha and Hikul which have good permanent rice cultivation; in the latter villages there is a growing tendency not to shift the sites when the surrounding *penda* slopes are exhausted, but to cultivate even remote slopes from the village site in the vicinity of the permanent rice fields. As the old feeling of village community weakens, houses are no longer built as long-houses, each containing groups of three or four houses occupied by brothers or near paternal cousins, but are built detached, each with its own granary close to it, instead of the householder having one compartment in the long granary row; even then, however, the detached houses tend to group themselves roughly into lines flanking a central open space, at one end of which is the village dormitory (*gotul-lon*), in its usual position. Even when a village site is becoming permanent, as at Orcha and Hikul, any sudden calamity, such as crop failure, epidemic or epizootic, will probably induce the villagers to shift. In several villages the *kasyeq-gaita* always keeps a hen sitting on eggs inside his house, and the addling of an undue proportion of these is frequently a signal for the shifting of the village; but a wise *gaita* does not let his eggs get addled unless there is really sound economic or religious reason for shifting, when the omens can be made to suit the occasion.

Behind each line of houses will be found rows of pig-sties, at least one for each house; and the pigs often seem better housed than their masters. Where, as around Orcha, sal (*Shorea robusta*) or other timber is plentiful, the pig-sties are generally made of sections of tree trunk or large boughs laid horizontally between vertical stays, with an opening in front which can be closed by dropping vertical posts over it between horizontal stays at the top and bottom of the opening. These sties are sheltered from the sun by grass-thatched roofs sloping back from two or more vertical posts about 6 feet high to similar posts about 4 feet high in the rear. Dug-out troughs of sal wood are kept outside or just inside the sties for water and food for the pigs; the commonest food is a mash made from the chaff or husks of *kosra* (*kutki*; *Panicum miliaceum*) and

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AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

343 other minor grains. Where timber is not available, these sties are
231 made from bamboos, or even from stones. Similar but, of course, far smaller structures are made to serve as hen-coops, resting generally against the side or front of the houses.

778 The shrine of the Village Mother, as has been stated above, is sometimes actually inside the village dormitory, sometimes just
361 outside it, and sometimes at a considerable distance from the actual village, in a grove, if possible of *saja* (*Terminalia tomentosa*—every-
[824] where the sacred tree of the Gond) trees. Sometimes there is also in the village, often at the end of the street opposite the dormitory, the hut-temple of the *pen* or clan-god, containing the log-frame image of the god. This will normally be found only in the village of the *pen-wadda'i* or priest of the clan-god; but sometimes, where the villages of the clan are far apart, there may be two copies of the clan-god, or the god may go to visit other villages, and have a resting-shed in each; or he may have begotten a son to deputize for him in the distant village; I have seen in a *pen-rawar* (clan-god's temple) both the *pen* himself and an embryo 'son' in the second of his three years' 'gestation'. The *pen* is always covered by a shed; but the Village Mother sometimes is just a cairn or a basket-cylinder filled with stones, or a low table-stone at the foot of a *saja* tree, and close by there is a small shed of grass thatch with open sides in which are kept the cooking pots, ladles and sacrificial knife used at ceremonial feasts. The sacred grove may in very rare cases, in villages near the edge of the lowlands, have also a hut-temple of Danteshwari Mai or Maolai, the most revered or feared Hindu deities of Bastar.

343 There will be found well apart from the houses and the rest of
841 the village a menstruation hut in many villages, known as *pedawo'-gha'i* to the Hill Marias, or sometimes as *dola-lon*. Here all menstruating women are secluded from the village for a week every month. Sometimes the hut has a single room, about 6 by 5 feet, with walls 3 feet high, with no windows and only a small door little bigger than the entrance to an English kennel; sometimes there are two rooms separated from each other by a partition, so that when a girl is afraid of being secluded by herself a duenna may sleep within sound of her without actual contact. The door of the seclusion room always opens away from the village, so that the affected woman may get out at night to answer the call of nature without overlooking the village or being visible to any villager. Special cooking pots and utensils are kept in the seclusion room, or else
[789 the woman's food is cooked outside and left by her door for her.
824] The roof is often covered with seed-bearing twigs of castor-oil plants, in all parts of India regarded as very efficacious against magic.

[text continues on p. 106]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

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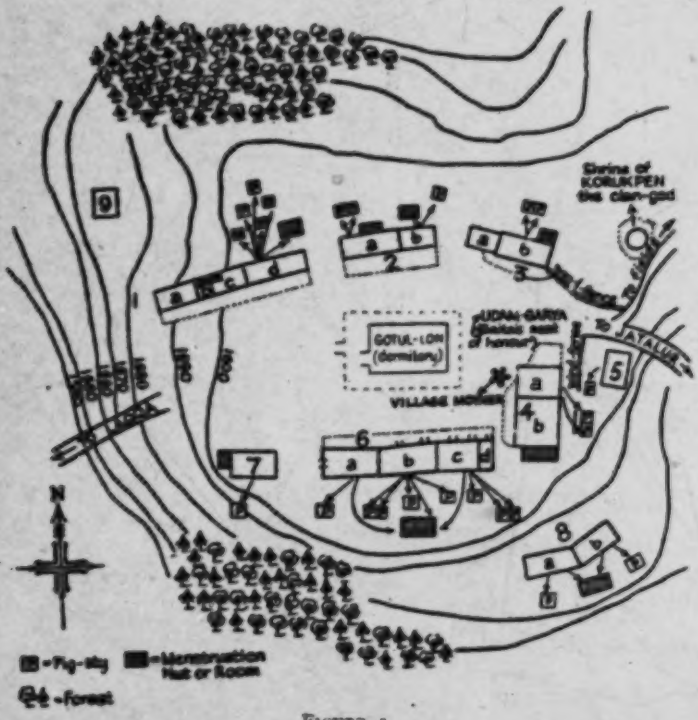

FIGURE 5

MAP OF KARANGAL VILLAGE OF THE PARLLO HILL MARIA CLAN, as occupied in February 1930. (Contours approximate.)

House-group 1 (*a*) Empty; built for Deda HUNGA, when serving for MURRA's niece, since marrying her, lives in KURMER. (*b*) P. BAIYYA's mother. (*c*) P. BAIYYA, wife and son. (*d*) P. MURRA, brother of BAIYYA, his wife, his son P. BANDE, wife and daughter.

2. (*a*) P. DOGA and wife. (*b*) P. KUTTA, wife, son. DOGA and KUTTA are elder and younger brothers, but separate in cultivation.
3. (*a*) Empty, since death of P. MURRA's elder brother's widow. (*b*) P. MURRA and wife.
4. (*a*) P. BAIYYA, kasveq-gaita, and wife. (*b*) his son P. GURRA, wife and son.
5. Ruined house of P. KUTTO, who had left village.
6. (*a*) P. MURRA and wife. (*b*) P. KUTA, 2 wives, 1 son. (*c*) P. KEYE, wife and 2 sons. (*d*) KEYE's mother. KUTA, MURRA and KEYE regard themselves as brothers, KUTA being the eldest; they are paternal third cousins. Their fields and pigs are separate, but menstruation hut common.
7. P. PANDA, wife, 1 son, 2 daughters, widowed mother.
8. (*a*) P. HEODA, wife and son. (*b*) P. MASA (his wife had eloped). HEODA is the elder, MASA the younger brother.
9. The house of a Rawat (herdsman), well apart from Maria houses.

The wind-fence is a stockade of thick poles.
The dotted lines are bamboo wickerwork fences.

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AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

343 But in many villages instead of a communal *pedawo'gha'i* there is
841 a separate hut at the back of each long-house for the use of the residents of each house contained in the long-house, called by the same name; or else in each house there is a *pedawo'gha'i* room known generally as *hala*,[1] with a door opening at the back of the house, separated from the rest of the house by a *binda* or low mud threshold about three feet from the back door. It is absolutely [784] *polo* or taboo for any male to set foot in the menstruation hut or room; I once saw a son who wanted to enter the house by the back door take a flying leap from outside so as to land beyond the *binda*. In every *hala* room there is a complete set of cooking vessels and utensils for the woman to use while she is in her courses, when it is *polo* for her to touch any of the regular household articles. The menstruation hut or room is also the scene of all child-births.

485 There is in some big villages a resting hut for travellers or State officials, known as the *paik-gotul* or *Kos-gotul*; *paik* is the word used for a member of the old militia, and *Kos* is the general word used by all Gonds for Hindus. This may also have a stable attached.

361 The sketch-plan on page 105 illustrates a fairly typical Hill Maria
[35] village, crowning a mountain spur; it represents the site occupied in 1930 by the Kutru Mar village of Karangal. The long-houses here had nearly all of them bamboo fences between them and the street, running along their front about three or four feet from their front wall. The doors have been shown only in the houses in long-house no. 6. The fences only give a little privacy, and spaces useful for storing fuel; they are not garden (*bari*) enclosures. Bamboo is very plentiful around Karangal; where it is less common, these fences are absent. The stockades of thick poles at the eastern side of this village were made to afford protection from the fierce and cold wind blowing off the hills from the north-east. The [778] Village Mother's shrine was a cylindrical basket of stones resting on five boulders in the open space between the dormitory and the *kasyeq-gaita's* house, near the latter's *udam-garia* seat of honour. This seat was a flat slab of stone resting on five thin slabs stuck vertically in the ground. The *pen-rawar* shrine of the clan-god Koruk Pen was a round hut surrounded with a bamboo fence to the east of the village by the side of the path leading to the *penda* fields; there is another shrine of this god at Nugur, a Parlio clan village a few miles away in the Indrawati valley. In Karangal
361 the only non-Maria was a Maria-speaking Rawat herdsman, who
624 was allowed a house site at some distance from the main street;
[194]

[1] Or *ala*; the aspirate is often dropped by Hill Marias.

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AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

and every Maria house was occupied by members of the Parllo clan, the only partial exception being the empty house (no. 1-a) which had till recently been occupied by a youth of the Deda clan, which may intermarry with the Parllo clan, serving as *lamana'i* to win the niece of Parllo Murra, occupant of house no. 1-d. It will be observed that some long-houses have a joint menstruation hut at the rear of the house, while in some there is a separate *kala* for each house in the long-house. The *kasyeq-gaita's* house is at the dormitory end of the street, a very usual position.

The shifting of villages

It has already been implied that though a village site may be abandoned for superstitious reasons, the predominant reason is economic, the exhaustion of the *penda* slopes that can be conveniently cultivated from the existing village. If three or more *kaghai* (*penda* sites) can be dealt with from one *paghai* or village site, then the village may remain on that site for seven or eight years, even though there are other *paghai* in the other *penda* sites cultivated from it; or if any portion of the last *penda* site to be cultivated is very remote from it, then a few houses may be shifted there. What makes the old topographical survey maps so useless for finding a modern village is that they mark only the village site occupied in the sixties, generally, too, by the particular name of that site, not by the general name of the village. The big village of Orcha, for example, is not marked as such, but by the name of its *paghai* Hoinar. A reference to the sketch map of the parish (to use a term more suitable than 'village') of Handawada in Dantewara Mar (opposite p. 108) will make the position clear. The parish has ten alternative *kaghai* cultivation sites, viz.:—

1. Kawar *kaghai*, 1st half.
2. Ditto, 2nd half.
3. Irapmeta *kaghai*.
4. Hitangpal *kaghai*.
5. Kurmelnar *kaghai*.
6. Rekarai *kaghai*.
7. Handawada *kaghai*, 1st half.
8. Ditto, 2nd half.
9. Ahekele *kaghai*, 1st half.
10. Ditto, 2nd half.

Of these, nos. 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 only contained *paghai* village sites. In February 1930 the main village was still settled in no. 9, but the *penda* slopes in nos. 9 and 10 had been exhausted, and those in no. 1 had been partly cultivated for the first year and were being reaped. Nos. 9 and 10 had lasted for six years and, though the villagers had started to cultivate no. 1 a long way below the village site in no. 9 and on the other side of the Goinder river, they were only then at harvest time starting to shift the village to the *paghai* in no. 2; in fact, the labour of the first year's work of clearing and cultivating a fresh *penda* slope is so heavy that the shifting of the village itself is, when necessitated by the distance of the existing site

[text continues on p. 109]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

PLATE X

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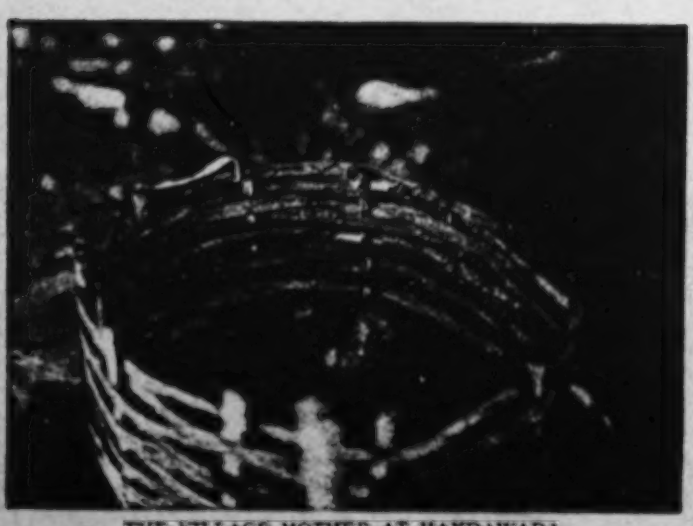
343

THE VILLAGE MOTHER'S SHRINE AT ORCHA

The stone at the foot of the *saja* tree trunk on the right is the Village Mother; the shed contains her cooking pots, utensils, etc.



THE VILLAGE MOTHER AT HANDAWADA

consisting of an oiled forked *saja* stick, bound with *kosa* silk. The lean-to thatched roof was removed to enable the photograph to be taken

[FACING p. 110]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949.
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

Lohu

1 *alpanji* platform for storing produce.
10 large baskets, containing grain and forest fruits.
1 blue dancing skirt or *hochi*.
5 gourd bottles.
1 axe.
2 sickles.
4 large earthenware pots.
1 ditto, used as *Hanal Kunda*.
1 hearth, used as *Hanal O'idal*.
3 very small earthenware pots of pigs' fat.
6 thick bamboo oil-tubes.

Most houses have, besides these, a number of drums, more bows and arrows, fishing-rods, lines and hooks, snares, nets of varying mesh for fish, birds and animals, throwing spears, fibre for making string and rope, hemp or grass for the same purpose, sandals of raw cow-hide, thongs of cow-hide, and *korr-guda*, or funnel-shaped hen's nests on bamboo posts about two feet high. They keep the bulk of their grain and forest fruits in their granaries, and the baskets in the house contain only what has been removed from the granary for current consumption; there are generally to be found quantities of new baskets made for sale at the bazaar. The baskets are of all shapes and sizes, and amongst other items include flat baskets something like winnows for use as platters, which they hold up full of food to their mouths.

Granaries

The granaries, whether built singly or in a long row, are almost invariably built on piles, the floor being 3 or 3½ feet above the ground. This not only protects the grain and dried fruit stored in the granary from damp and white ants, but, as already remarked, provides an extra sleeping place for the males of the family and any male guests. There are three rows of piles, the two outer ones being tree trunks, seven or eight feet high, cut with a piece of a bough forking off at the floor height and trimmed short as a rest for the horizontal beams which support the flooring; the central piles have similar forks turned inwards at floor-height to support the floor beams, but are two or three feet higher above the floor than the outer piles, as they have to support the roof-tree. The upper ends of these long piles are either naturally forked or else notched to support the horizontal roof beams, which bear a thatched roof constructed in the same way as the roofs of dwelling-houses. Planks are laid across the floor beams at the points where these rest on the lower forks of the piles, and a flooring of bamboo wicker-work is laid on them. The walls are made of bamboo check wicker-work, the wefts being carried on around each corner of the building, where a thin pole resting on a floor plank forms the corner warp; the other warps are unsplit bamboos, but

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AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

343 the wefts are of split bamboo. The corners of the walls are further secured by cords stitched through the two wicker walls round the corner warp and the corner pile. Wherever beams cross, they are [283] lashed with *siāri* twine or thicker rope. The door of a single granary is usually a sliding piece of bamboo wicker-work; but in the long granaries it is a section of *tum* grass fence or bamboo wicker-work fastened in position by obliquely crossing bamboos.

251 These granaries contain immense quantities of *kosra* and other hill grains, rice, beans, dried forest fruits, etc., in big bins of bamboo basketry, smaller baskets, and large *chiptis* or lidded boxes of leaves on a framework of cane or twigs. The bins are all lidded with stitched-leaf tops, tied round the rim with creeper cord, like the paper top of an English jam-jar. The Marias store here also dried rolls of tobacco leaves, coils of creeper and other ropes, and gourds of all shapes and sizes for making spoons, ladles and water-bottles; and when they used *moghi* dancing shields and peacock plumes attached to them they used to hang them under the eaves except when they wrapped them in leaves and hung them in the tops of trees.

342 513 The village dormitory, as has been said above, is generally in the centre and at one end of the village street. It is a long-house made with no partitions, surrounded generally with a bamboo wattle-work fence; and it is practically a roofed *alpanji* or sleeping platform, the criss-cross bamboo framework of which covers almost the whole floor at a height of about 2½ feet above the floor. Often it is entered from in front by a door under the highest point of the eaves, to which access is gained by a narrow horizontal gangway of logs raised the same height above the ground as the sleeping platform and extending from the outer fence to the door; persons entering the dormitory climb on to the gangway by a rough stile, consisting of a tree stump set in the ground between two vertical posts which serve as railings. [374] The interior is badly grimed with smoke, as log fires are lit at night under the sleeping platform, the only door is fastened, and there is no window or vent for the escape of smoke. I have never found anything inside a dormitory except two or three drums and occasionally the shrine of the Village Mother.

The 'gotul-lon'

B. Bison-horn Maria Villages, Houses, and their Contents

361 Of Hill Maria villages the essential thing to remember is that they shift as the cultivation shifts, and so seldom remain more than four or five years in one place. The few villages that have good permanent rice fields tend now to become more or less permanent.

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AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

361 The villages being permanent in comparison to the Hill Maria
364 villages, they are apt naturally to be considerably dirtier, and this is
177 accentuated by the far larger numbers of cattle and goats that the greater wealth of the Bison-horn Marias enables them to keep. The houses, too, are far dirtier and more smoke-grimed, though in places the Hindu practice of constantly replastering the floors with fresh cow-dung is coming in. They are smaller also, as the spread of cultivation has restricted the available sources of timber and bamboo; but where ample forest is near, the houses are larger, and sleeping sheds for the men as well as cattle byres make individual homesteads appear larger than the homes of the Hill Marias.

342 The long-houses of the Hill Marias are never seen in the Bison-
361 horn Maria villages. Individualism is becoming yearly more marked among the Bison-horn Marias, and every man likes to have his own house and property distinct from his brothers and cousins. Their houses, instead of being parallel to the village street are generally at right angles to it, and a double row of houses, one on each side of the street, is often impossible, because the houses are too close to each other to allow each house to have its *bari* (garden enclosure) behind it, so that some householders (like those of houses B and E in the rough sketch of part of Telam village on page 121) must have their *bari* opposite them across the street. Each [351] *bari* is fenced right round with bamboo wattle-work, so that the fences of the *baris* opposite the line of houses appear like a continuous wattle-work wall along one side of the street. But there may be in the middle of the street occasional granaries or other buildings, and the houses are often irregularly scattered about with no pretence of formal alignment, so that the ordered arrangement of a Hill Maria village is completely absent. There are as many [231] pig-sties in Bison-horn as in Hill Maria villages, but they are far less elaborately and adequately constructed, though protected, like the Hill Maria sties, by leaning thatches from the sun.

361 The houses of the clan that founded the village are usually all together in one group, and there are separate groups for each of the clans with which it intermarries.

343 There appears to be no common menstruation hut among
841 the Bison-horn Marias, nor, indeed, any special menstruation room in their houses. A special hut or booth is erected near the house for the delivery of a child, and in a few villages near the borders of the Hill Maria country there is a hut called the *Pilo-kurma* for each group of houses, where apparently young girls are segregated for their first menstruation; but I noted that I might have misunderstood the information that I was given about this hut, and in villages in the heart of the Bison-horn country was definitely told

[text continues on p. 122]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

that there was no custom of segregating menstruating girls or women.

There is in every Bison-horn village a *paik-gotul* or lodging-hut for State officials, but I have never seen a *gotul-lon* dormitory for bachelors. I was once told that there are such dormitories in a few big villages such as Ghotpal, Karli, Tumnar, Massenar and Dugeli, but could not find one in these villages; nor did the State officials who gathered information for me in various parts of the Bison-horn country ever report their existence. The *padas* (headmen) and *pormas* (village priests) whom I saw at Aranpur and other camps stated that such dormitories were a degraded institution found only among Hill Marias and Murias. They are not mentioned by Madras writers on the Koyas and Dorlas.

Bison-horn villages are not found on the tops of hills and isolated spurs like Hill Maria villages. They are located in positions convenient for communications, water supply or cultivation, like lowland villages in all countries. Many of them, especially in the Jagdalpur tahsil, have cart tracks leading to them, though these are used mainly by the Hindu and Mohammedan traders who bring their wares to the various weekly markets already established in their bigger villages. Though, however, some Bison-horn Marias have carts, and more keep cattle and do not always leave it to the Rawat herdsman servant to milk them, while many use ploughs, yet the majority of them still think it not the thing for Koitor to drive carts, or that they could never manage them; and there are, therefore, very many villages approachable only by footpaths. They make bridges very similar to those of the Hill Marias, often on a more elaborate scale.

The only Bison-horn Maria village where I could find memory of a fairly recent shifting was Bare Gudra, in the Kuakonda *pargana* of Dantewara tahsil. My informant was Kartami Mukka, the old village priest (*perma*) of the village, who said that when he was young the village was settled in the now abandoned Mundi *padar* (village site); there was heavy mortality from epidemic and epizootic outbreaks for some years, and a series of crop failures. Then the eggs in his father's house began always to get addled, and his father, the *perma*, interpreting this as a final intimation that the village had to be shifted, called up the elders to see the eggs, and they agreed that the village must be shifted. They had then, on a Monday, Wednesday or Friday, to go at noon with the *perma* to select the *padar* for the new village; and to test the omens at the new *padar* the *perma* dug a small hole in the ground. In the first hole he found a root growing across the hole, and so changed to another position

Shifting villages

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

342 of logs covers nearly the whole of the room, except the dark corner
251 where, as among the Hill Marias, rests the *Hanal Kunda* or Pot of
[769] the Departed. The various grains are stored in bamboo bins or in very large leaf-work *chiptis*. Other baskets contain dried mango pulp, fresh mangoes, mango kernels whole or crushed, the mousy smelling flowers of the *mahua* (*Bassia latifolia*), *mahua* seeds, and the fresh or dried fruits of the tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*), *seona* (*Gmelina arborea*), *achar* (*Buchanania latifolia*), *tendu* (*Diospyros melanoxylon*), *siari* (elephant creeper, *Bauhinia vahlii*), the various dwarf palms, and other trees. They store far more forest produce than the Hill Marias, but less grain; their *penda* slopes are
[832] far less extensive, and, as copper coin circulates freely among them, they sell much more of their rice and garden produce. They do not use the various forest yams nearly as much as the Hill Marias.

342 The *narma-lon* is a sleeping room for the women and small
[513] children, and household goods and utensils are kept there. In the *oser* is the cooking hearth, the *akhi* mortar holes in which grain is husked with the large *musal* pestle, very similar in type to the Hill Maria *sapal*, hen's nests, water-pots, leaves for plates, etc.
[873] If any of the intoxicating *landa* gruel is under brew, it is kept usually in the cooler and darker *wijja-lon* or *narma-lon*. An interesting utensil seen in many Bison-horn houses is a spoon of brass, like
[845] an English pipe with a straight stem, and an exact reproduction
326] in shape of the gourd ladles known in the hills as *paghas* and in the plains as *orka*, described on page 66 above. This is called a *kal-burria* or 'wine-ladle' and is used for distributing liquor. It is made by the Gharwa brass-workers by the *cire-perdue* process.

343 There are often side-sheds in which members of the family sleep, or where goats or kine are tethered at night, and poultry roost.

422 The other contents of their houses are similar to those of the Hill Maria houses, but they generally have more tools, weapons, hunting-nets, clothes and jewellery, owing to their growing habit of regular attendance at weekly bazaars and their greater readiness to sell their produce.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

and frequently fowls also, and dogs. From the platform radiate cords of *siavi* twine to bamboo rattles hung from trees or posts in various parts of the field, to enable the occupant to scare birds or animals. It is taboo (*polo*) for women to sleep in these field-houses (*dodi*). Less elaborate sleeping or resting platforms are also made which are really cots surrounded with rough round bamboo walls; for women to cook and to rest in during the heat of the day rough conical shelters are made of bamboos and leaves, like Red Indian wigwams, known as *panambakska*. They may also erect big and small sheds called *kotul*, consisting of thatched eaves resting on upright posts, unwalled; rough granaries for storing grain until it is removed after the harvest to the permanent granaries; and log platforms for stacking the reaped sheaves.

Sowing is begun after the first showers of the monsoon rains, in Na month. The date is fixed at a meeting of the men in the dormitory (*gotul-lon*) a day or two beforehand.

Sowing

From the night before the sowing (*wijja'i*) till all the seeds have sprouted, it is taboo for men to cohabit with their wives, and they therefore sleep with the bachelors in the dormitory. Before sunrise on sowing day the head of each family goes to the forest and picks two *saja* leaves to serve as 'seed-leaves' (*wijj-akk*). These he brings into the *lonu* room of his house, and lays on the floor near the Pot of the Departed; he squats down before them, raises his hands, palm to palm, to his forehead, and lowers them, fists closed, to the floor in front of the leaves, saying, '*Tador-pepi mit henjat! Miku har hikanom, inje henjatu; aru maki nahna nahna anam wayi! Inje ram aimatu, manemasi mantu!*' (Hearken, O Ancestors! We adjure you, hearken now, and let us have an excellent harvest! Let not your wrath now fall upon us, and be not deaf to my prayer).[1] He then hangs the two leaves from the kitchen (*angadi*) ceiling, where they remain till next seed-time, when he takes them down, and deposits them on a forest path.

On behalf of all the villagers also, the *kasyap-gaita* makes a public offering of an egg to the Village Mother, either at her regular shrine or at some white ants' hill close to the village (not in the *penda* fields), before they go out to sow. No women may attend this ceremony.

At the first sowing they broadcast the early ripening varieties of the hill millets over about half the *penda* plots, and sow also lines of *til* or roselle to mark the limits of individual holdings. Subsequent sowings of later crops are not preceded by any ceremony.

[1] Literally, word by word, 'Ancestors, you hear! To you remembrance we make, now hear, and to-us good good harvest let-be! Now anger let-not-be, hearing abide.'

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

Hinduization weakens the taboo on the menstruating and strengthens that on the pregnant woman. It was at Gudra, which stands on a motor-road, that I heard most about restrictions during pregnancy. The pregnant woman in that village was not allowed to cross a stream or the rope with which a horse was tethered; she could not pick or reap any growing thing; if she plastered a wall, she must leave a small hole somewhere. She must not eat the head or legs of a sacrificed animal.[1] Eclipses are dangerous; if a woman goes out of doors at such a time there is danger that her child may be born with a hare-lip or a squint. It is sometimes held that a pregnant woman should not go to the forest clearings; at Barem the daughter of Barse Chule did so; she met a Rau in a whirlwind and was prematurely delivered of a stillborn child.

The cravings of pregnancy are believed, as elsewhere in India, to be due to the erratic and uncertain desires of the child in the womb, but whereas there is usually a belief that it is essential to gratify these cravings I found some Bison-horn Marias of opinion that to do so was dangerous. 'If she eats earth, she will die; if she craves for fish and gets it, she will die.' But at Gudra they took the conventional view and held it was more dangerous to deny the cravings than to fulfil them. Long ago, I was told, a woman wanted a plantain and could not get it; the child was born with a plantain in its hand. Another woman demanded buttermilk and when her request was denied, her hands and feet swelled.

Birth normally occurs on the fenced-in veranda of a Bison-horn Maria house, in the place where the menstruating woman has to sleep. Any variation from the normal is considered dangerous; a foot-presentation, for example, is expected to prove fatal to both child and mother. For the cord to be discovered round the shoulder is a good omen and prophesies wealth; but a strangulating cord suggests that the child will be hanged and a cord round the leg is also bad. The cord is cut with an arrow-head if the child is a boy, with a knife or sickle if it is a girl. The mother herself or some old woman of the household makes a ligature and severs the cord below it. Meanwhile the husband erects in the compound a small 'bathing-hut', a simple unroofed structure of leafy branches, inside which he digs a pit. Then the mother herself, or her attendant, puts the placenta and cord on a leaf-platter of *Saukinia vahlii* leaves[2] and places it in the pit. The father fills the pit with earth and places three green logs and sometimes a large stone or wooden

[1] I have been told that no woman should at any time eat part of an animal sacrificed to Bhimsul or Dongar Pen.

[2] This platter, which is chosen at random from a pile, is carefully examined, for the number of children the mother may expect is estimated from the number of bamboo stitches holding it together

I. Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

231
343

Bison-horn Marias at Bastanar struggle to get a goat into its shed [illegible]

[End Plate L]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

V. MENSTRUATION

561 Neither in the ghotul nor outside are the age-grades of Muria children very strictly defined. There are, for example, no rites of transfer from one age-grade to another, but generally four different stages in a child's growth to maturity are recognized. The first stage for a boy or girl is babyhood; the boy is called *pila*, the girl *pili* or *noni* (daughter). This stage lasts a year. The child then becomes a *tākna peka* or *peda* (feminine *tākna peki* or *pedi*), the word *tākna* meaning 'a toddler'. This stage lasts for two or three years till the child begins to play about the house and perform little tasks, when it is known as a *leka* or *leki*. At the age of seven or eight the boy becomes a *lāyor peka* or *nangriya*, the second word implying that he is now able to go along with his father behind the plough. A girl of the same age is known as *lāya peki*, *nerwa lāya* (meaning 'immature', a girl who does not yet have to wash after her menstrual period) or in Halbi *tāndak pāni ānu leki*. Finally a girl on passing her menarche becomes a *lāya*, *torita*, *tarni*, *dhāngri*. She is now *juwān* or *mast juwān*, mature. A boy too is now called *lāyor*, *dhāngra*, *dinda* (meaning unmarried) or *juwān* (meaning mature).

841 The significant moment in these stages of growth is obviously a girl's first menstruation. This is a crisis of enormous importance to her both socially and psychologically. The fact that she is subject to this monthly cycle sets her as woman in an entirely different category to man. Menstrual blood makes her dangerous, infectious while alive; it may turn her into a ghost of dread and horror after death. A dozen names and expressions for this condition testify to the importance it has in the Muria mind. It will be most convenient to give them in tabular form: all, except the last three, are Gondi.

Pendawaghai	'Her private parts are flowing.'
Kata pongta	'The bank of the field is broken.'
Natur dawta	'Blood is flowing.'
Tera pongta	'Blood is flowing.'
Arro āta	'She is taboo.'
Atāna āyo	'She is not cooking.'
Arka chhande hita	'She's in the position of one who may not touch cooking-pots.'
Pirita	'She is wrung out like a dhoti.'
Ghāt utaris	'She can't go to the water-place.'
Bhāta me hona	'To be outside,' i.e. she cannot enter the house.
Dhār lohta	'Blood is flowing.'

The first menstruation is called *yete arta* ('the call to water') in Gondi and *phulwardi* ('the blossoming of the flower') in Halbi.

841 In many villages, especially those to the west where the influence of the Abujhmar Maria is strong, the Muria build separate huts where their women can
● 343 be segregated at this period.[1] Sometimes they make one communal hut for the whole village; sometimes there is one hut for a group of houses; occasionally a big house with a large family has a hut to itself. The Muria do not generally build such huts outside the village, but in some isolated spot within its borders. The huts are usually wretched little buildings with small doors. Inside may be seen a bed, a cooking-hearth, a few pots, some strips of cloth, a little firewood. The hut is built by the chelik—no married man may help—who are paid by the village women with liquor for their services. Every year at

[1] Among many other villages may be mentioned Sarondi, Chingnar, Kaleparas, Hoshur, Nelnara and Talshera. The huts are called in Gondi *nilla-kowas* (the hut that must not be touched) or *yer nayāna kot* (the hut for bathing in water).

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 A W32 Gond A W32
Muria

841
[343]

the beginning of the rains only the young chelik in the *nangriya* age-grade may re-thatch the roof. When they have finished, they have to pay a 'fine' of seeds or liquor to the ghotul. Girls must never touch the roof.

The motiari's life in this hut is miserable enough. At Padbera a girl exclaimed, 'You feel as if you were in jail; why has God sentenced us girls to such a punishment as this?' While she is segregated in the hut a girl must not go to a well for water, though she may go to the nearest stream. She must not go about the village for fear that her shadow may fall on a man and destroy him. She may, however, go to the forest for wood or leaves. Another girl at Talabera said, 'When we stay in the hut we always feel very hungry; sometimes we cook for ourselves, but generally the family brings it for us. Someone puts it down outside and runs away. If it is not enough, we cannot ask for more. My knees always ache, my stomach hurts, I feel lazy and unhappy, my head is heavy and in my breast is that *dak dak dak* feeling.' She went on to describe how at night they were very frightened lest some Ondar Muttai attacked them. 'We sit up together comforting one another for many hours. When we dream, we see ourselves singing and playing with the chelik and motiari. When at last we have a dream of the embankment of a tank being repaired, we know that the period is over and we will be able to return home.'

In the centre and east of the State, segregation huts are not erected. Their distribution seems to depend not only on the strength of Maria influence, but also on the style of village architecture. As we move east, we find the houses built with very large and deep verandahs where there is plenty of room for a girl to feed and sleep without coming into contact with the rest of the family. It will generally be found that where special menstruation huts are made, the village houses are small and without adequate verandah space. This is one of the reasons why the Hill Maria make a special menstruation room in their houses, even where they do not make a special hut.

But although the girls are less strictly isolated and their lot is thus less wretched than where they have to spend their days and nights away from everyone, the taboos controlling their work and movements are very strict and are enforced by stringent sanctions. These rules indeed are common throughout India,[1] though adapted to the special circumstances of Muria life. The motiari during her period may not cook or fetch water or touch the grain-bins or approach any cultivated field or clearing for shifting cultivation. If she goes into a field where the rice is sprouting it will never reach maturity. She must not step across even the mark of a plough on the ground. She cannot attend a marriage or festival. She must not go near the shrine of the Village Mother. If she is present at any occasion where liquor is being distributed, she must not accept it from the hands of a man; another girl takes it for her and hands it to her in a leaf-cup. She must not take part in any games or dances, particularly in any ceremonial dances.

The most stringent taboo is on her relations with men. Sexual intercourse is absolutely forbidden; though the woman does not seem to be affected, the man who goes to a menstruating woman will die. There is no cure for him, magician and priest are alike helpless. He is lost. The woman must not even touch a man or let her shadow fall upon him. Should a man be accidentally touched he is excommunicated and must be purified by passing through 'a ring of fire' before anyone will accept food or tobacco from him.

[1] For a full account of these, see my paper, 'Primitive Ideas of Menstruation and the Climacteric', *Essays in Anthropology Presented to S. C. Roy* (Calcutta, 1945), pp. 141–57.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

times in a little house of their own, sometimes in a room lent to them by an old widow. Where there is a separate hut, this is sometimes also used for the segregation of menstruating women. In a few places there are special buildings for this purpose. The houses of the headmen are not built in any special position, but those of the Siraha medicine-men can generally be distinguished by the little huts for patients which are built round them. On the outskirts of the village will be found the shrine of the Village Mother, and in a grove nearby there may be the temple of one of the clan-gods. Beyond is the village burial place and cremation ground. Rows of menhirs in memory of the Dead may be seen in the majority of villages.

There is no standard pattern for the Maria house any more than there is for the Maria village. Most of the houses consist of three rooms, each a separate building with eaves at different levels, which make them look, as Grigson says, 'like card houses'. The first room, which is really a built-in verandah, is the kitchen. It leads into a bedroom and this in turn opens into an inner and secret room mostly occupied by a platform for storing grain and other possessions; in one corner is the Pot of the Departed about which centres the Maria cult of the Ancestors. Frequently two or more such houses are built round a courtyard, part of which is occupied by a more or less open building where people sit to talk and work.

Maria women's dancing-stick (3½' long)

The houses are generally clean and pleasant, but littered with a great variety of domestic and agricultural impediments. Outside are the pig-styes and cattle-sheds,

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

343 substantial and carefully tended buildings. Fowls, set in [23] funnel-shaped bamboo stands, share the house with the human beings.

II

241 The Maria's main source of livelihood is agriculture. The ancient and traditional method is axe-cultivation, whereby the people make clearings in the forest with their axes, allow the felled wood to dry, fire it shortly before the rains and then sow the seed in the ashes. Sometimes this is done in the very place where the trees are cut. Sometimes brush-wood is carried to a regular field and spread upon its surface. The Maria, living as they do in settled and often level country, have also many permanent fields which are embanked and [312] irrigated by artificial tanks. The Maria are very proud of these tanks, and they are a frequent cause of dispute which sometimes leads to murder. A great part of the Maria's life is necessarily spent in these fields and clearings, and little field-huts and platforms are erected in which whole families camp for weeks at a time watching the crops at night and cooking and doing their work by day. Everybody helps in the work. Beside the family there may be farm-hands, some [444 583] of a special kind such as the Lamhada, who serves for his wife instead of paying the bride-price, and the Kabari who is a bond-servant working to repay a loan.[1]

Besides agriculture, the Maria eagerly and successfully exploit the produce of the great forests in which they live. [222 262] There is nothing edible that they will not eat, fruits, roots, tubers, leaves—they have a profound knowledge of the possibilities of natural produce. They are equally omnivorous in their attitude to meat. In the villages they keep pigs, goats and fowls, and they are fond of pigeons. They still (though they often deny it to outsiders) eat beef on all important and 224 ceremonial occasions. Rats, squirrels and small birds are caught by the children and roasted and eaten with delight.

[1] The Kabari system, which is similar to what is called Bhagela in Hyderabad, Kamiauti in Bihar, and Gothi in Orissa and Madras, is open to grave abuses—men working a whole life-time to settle a debt which is not settled even by death, but descends to the sons—and is now controlled by the State.

3: Elwin E-S (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

133
943

Distant view of the Baiadila Hills

[facing p. 64]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

abused his brother who had recently taken up his sacred duties, criticizing him as an economic liability to the family, the latter seized the trident in the village temple and killed his critic with it.

Another incident of the same kind occurred in Kosalnar. An old man Hemla Mukka had a leprous wife. He used to call the Siraha, Jhoria Hunga, to his house to treat her. One day when she was feeling specially ill, she asked her husband to go and fetch him. He went for him, but found him asleep. He woke him up and told him what he wanted. But Jhoria, who was tired after watching his fields was annoyed at being woken, and got up and hit the old man saying he was not going to give up his own work in order to treat other people. Mukka went away, but just outside the house he said loudly that his wife could be cured without the help of any Siraha. This Siraha, he said, was a *chor mailotia* (a thief who lay with his mother). When Hunga heard this insult to his profession, he came out of the house with a heavy bamboo stick and beat Mukka till he died.

Iron trident

One of the features of any Siraha's house is the little hut for 'in-patients' built a short distance away in the garden or under trees. Especially when a Siraha gets some kind of reputation for diagnosis and cure, he is visited by patients from many different villages. These come laden with dark and unknown infections and must not be admitted into his house. Little huts of leaves and branches are made for them outside, where they

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

live in some discomfort and under unnatural and strained conditions. These abnormal strains have resulted, more than once, in murder being committed.

Barse Chappe was a polygamous invalid. After suffering for some time from giddiness and trouble with his heart and eyes, he went to the village Siraha named Pocha for treatment. He became an 'in-patient' and was accommodated in a little hut. After Chappe had spent three days there, he felt better and went to Jagdalpur to give evidence in a police case. Here again he got ill and fell to the ground in a fit, and the Public Prosecutor was compelled to give him up. He returned to his own house, but when he reached it he had to spend the night outside on the verandah, as his wives told him that he would have to offer certain sacrifices in gratitude for his previous recovery before he could enter the house. The following day he again went to the Siraha for treatment and camped under a mango tree nearby. He was accompanied by his senior wife Sukhi and his little daughter Bode. From time to time his junior wife Chule, who remained in charge of the home, came to see him. After a week, one afternoon when Chule had brought food, Chappe asked both his wives to have intercourse with him in the hut. They refused saying that the place was too open, and that it was daytime and everyone would see them. Chappe got angry and beat both the women.

A few days later, at about 5 o'clock in the evening, Chappe again asked his senior wife to have intercourse with him in the hut. But Bode and two women were sitting only a few paces away on the verandah of the Siraha's hut—whence the hut was in full view—again they were able to overhear Chappe's conversation. Sukhi again refused and told her husband that he ought to be ashamed of himself for suggesting such a thing in the hearing of three other women, especially when one of them was his own daughter.

At this Chappe lost his temper. He picked up a heavy bamboo stick and beat his wife so heavily that she died.

In his defence Chappe gave evidence of delusions. He denied that his reason for beating Sukhi was that she refused to have intercourse with him. He said that for the past week she had been giving him contaminated food. He had asked her not to cook in the Siraha's house where anybody might

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

674 607 he was only outraging his personal marital feelings. Kopa was working as Poda's Kabari or farm-servant at Kaurgaon on the banks of the Indrawati River. Five years before the murder Poda discovered that the boy was enjoying a love affair with his wife, taking advantage of the privileged relationship in which he stood to her. A ceremony of purification and appeasement was performed and Kopa left Ragho alone for a time. But they were evidently really in love with one another, and soon their intimacy began again. In July 1933, Poda discovered this and turned Kopa out of his house and service. Kopa went to live with another cousin in the same village.

On the night of Sunday 30 July, Kopa crept into Poda's house in the middle of the night in order to lie with Ragho. But while they were together, her hand accidentally knocked against her husband who was sleeping by her side and woke him. Kopa ran for his life, but not before he had been recognized.

The following day news came that a member of the family in another village, Chota Karka, had died, and Poda with Ragho, Kopa and other relatives went to the place for the funeral ceremonies. On the Wednesday there was an open quarrel there between the two men, and Poda told the elders of the village of Kopa's behaviour and beat him publicly. Kopa ran away and hid in the forest. Then on the Thursday everyone went home.

That afternoon three of Poda's servants were working in his field, weeding the kosra crop. In the field there was [343] the usual field-hut in which the cultivators rest and guard the crops. It was raining that day, and at about 4-30 in [293] the afternoon Kopa arrived there carrying a bamboo umbrella and sat down by the fire in the field-hut to dry himself. A little later Poda came and when he saw who was sitting there he fell into a great rage. He beat Kopa several times with his bare fists, knocked him on his back, sat on his chest and throttled him with both hands. The three servants did not dare to interfere, but stood watching.

Then Poda had the body taken to another hut in someone else's field, tied a rope round the neck of the corpse, and strung it up to the roof to give the impression that the dead man had committed suicide. He bribed the witnesses and